

Pursuing “Ideal” or Emphasizing “Coping”

**the new definition of peak-
performance and transformation of
mental training pattern**

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What is peak performance?



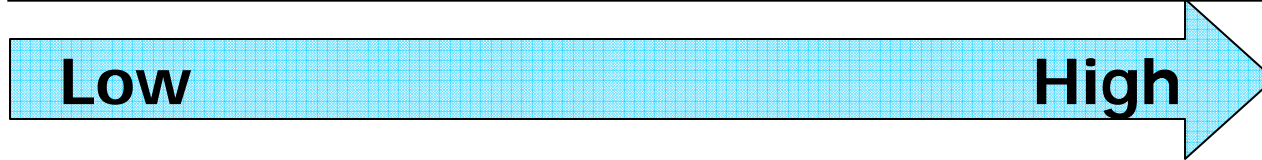
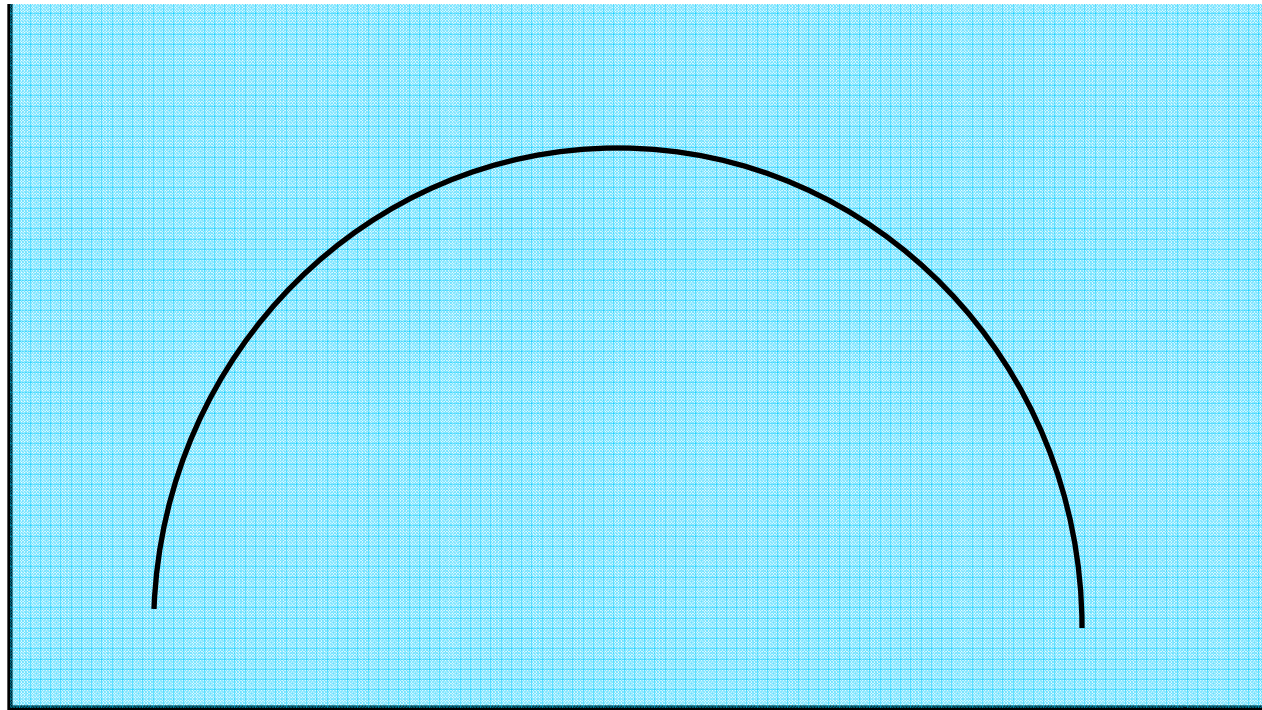
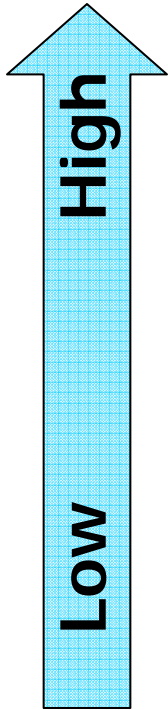
Review

- Inverted-U Hypothesis (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908)
- Iceberg Profile (Morgan, 1980)
- Multidimensional Anxiety Theory (Martens, Vealey, & Burton, 1980)
- Catastrophe Model (Hardy & Parfitt, 1991)
- Zone of Optimal Functioning (Hanin, 1989)
- Flow Experience (Jackson, 1996)

Inverted-U Hypothesis

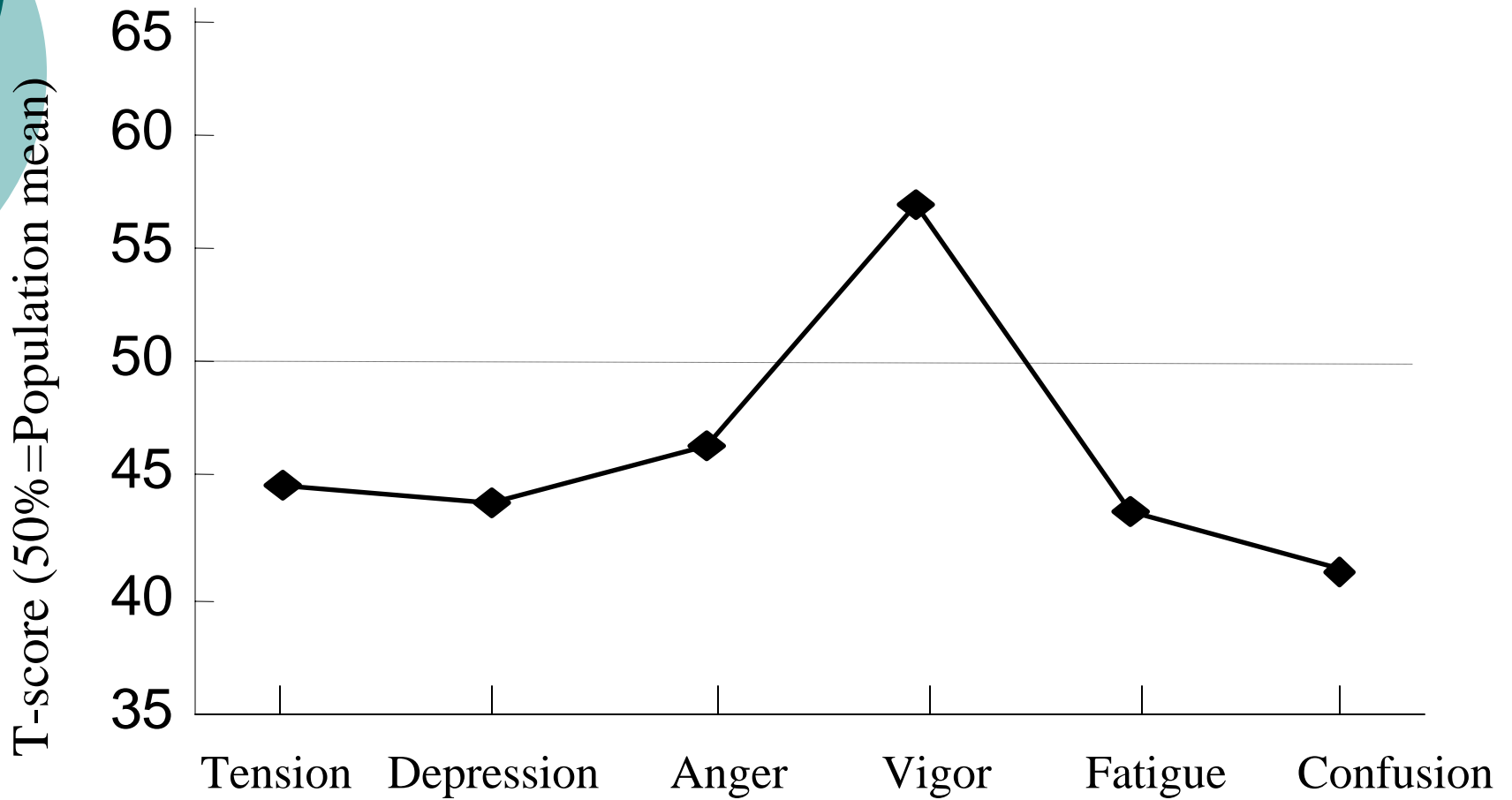


Performance



Physiological arousal

Iceberg Profile

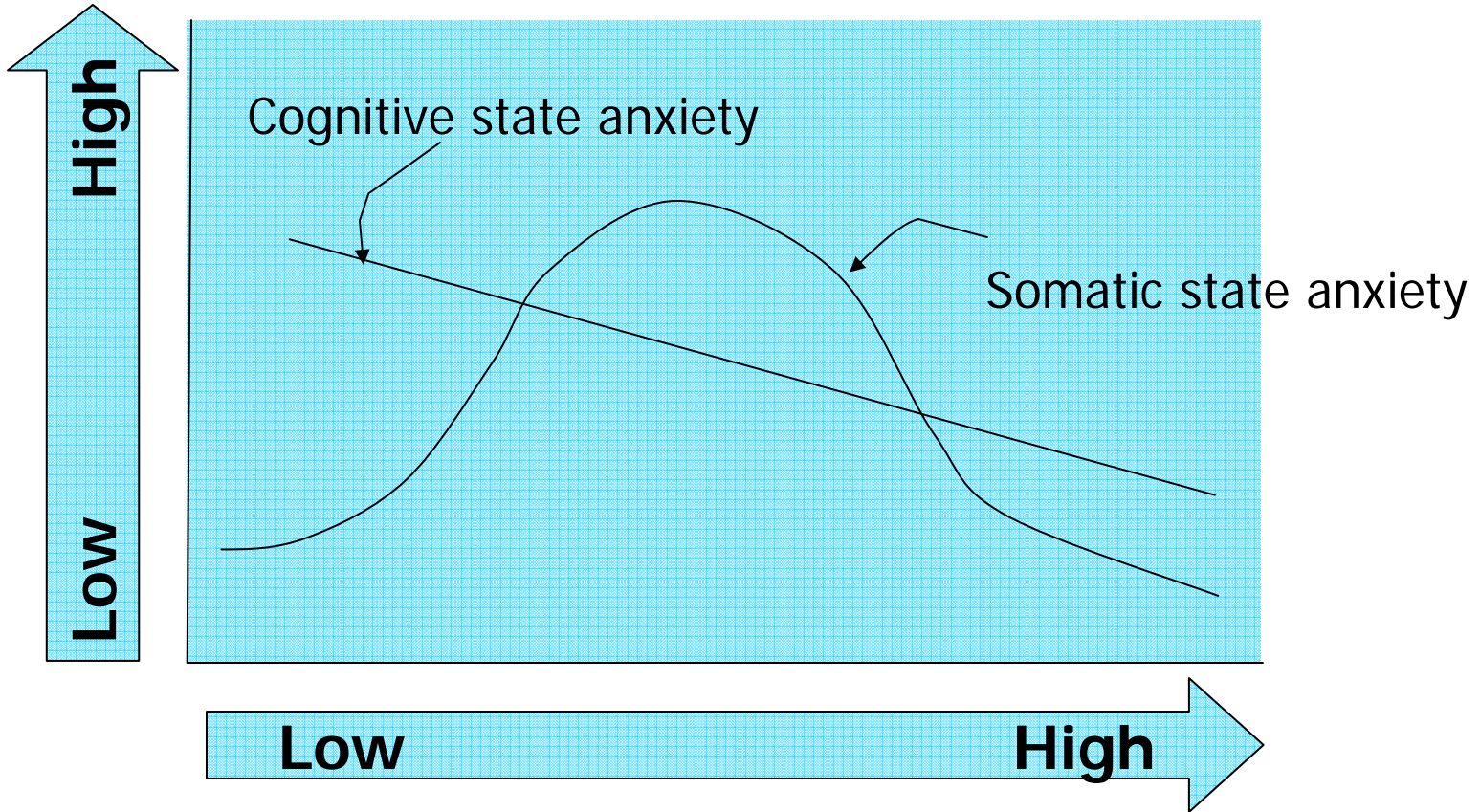


(Morgan, 1980)

Multidimensional Anxiety Theory



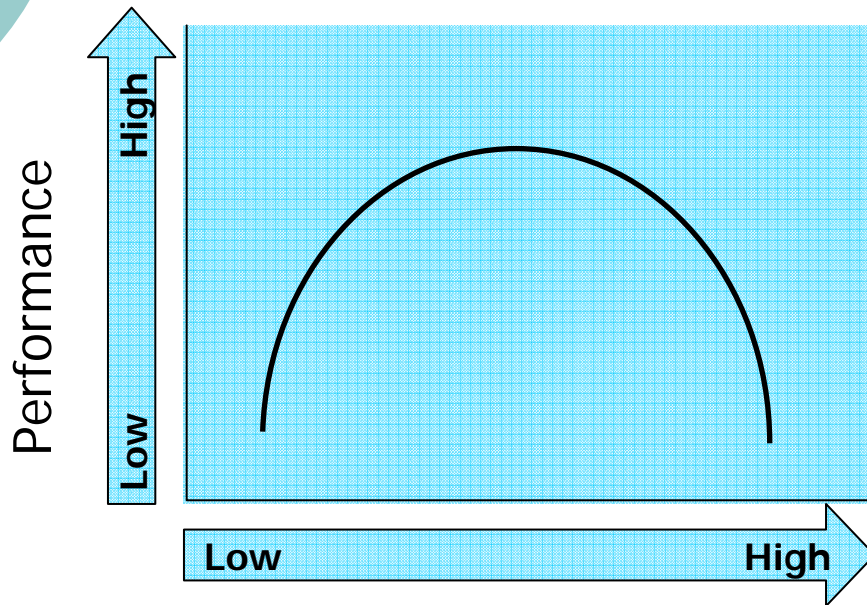
Performance



state anxiety

Catastrophe Model

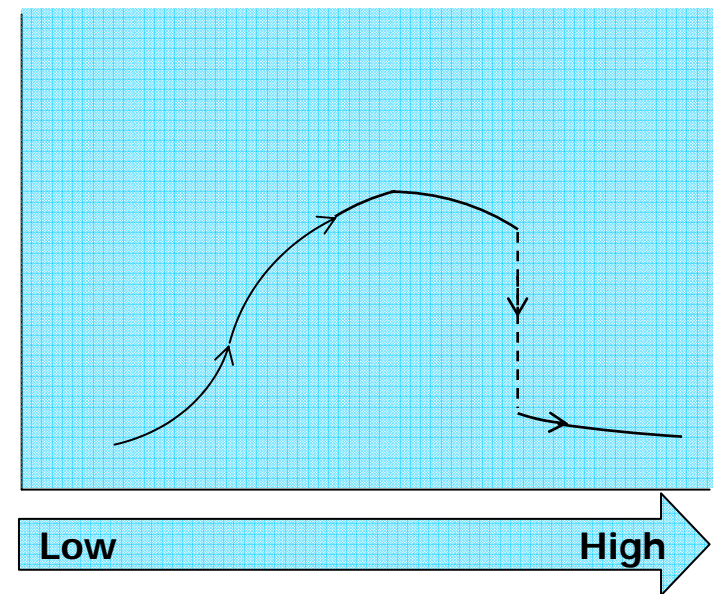
Low cognitive state anxiety



a.

Physiological arousal

High cognitive state anxiety



b.

Physiological arousal

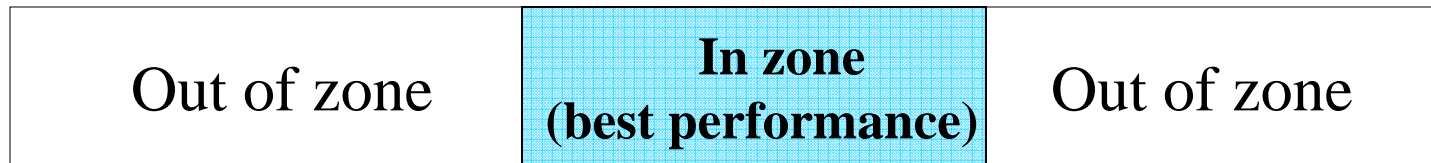
Zone of Optimal Functioning



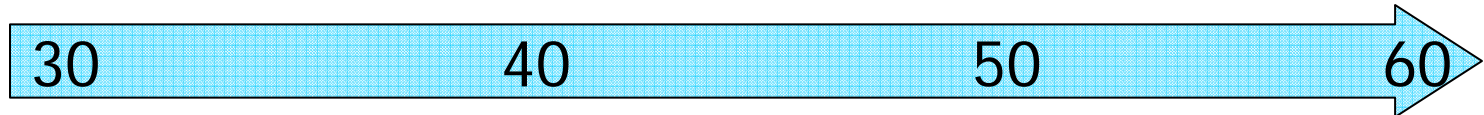
Athlete A
low ZOF



Athlete B
Moderate
ZOF



Athlete C
High ZOF



Low

State anxiety level

High



Flow Experience

The factors facilitating and hindering the appearance of flow state

Effect on flow state

factors

facilitating

- 1、 Positive mental set
- 2、 Positive pre-competition environment
- 3、 Positive effect of competition
- 4、 Moderate concentration
- 5、 Physical preparation
- 6、 Keep coherence with teammates and coaches

hindering

- 1、 Experiencing physical problem
 - 2、 Failed keeping suitable concentration
 - 3、 Negative mental set
 - 4、 lack of feedback from audiences
-



Summary

The common characteristic of the above mentioned theories is that they all emphasize on pursuing “ideal” psychological state.

These theories stress on the “optimized” principle when describing and defining “peak performance” from the perspective of psychology.



Difficulties that ideal theories face in reality

1. operational issues for finding out and activating an optimal mental state.
2. how to keep “optimal” unchanged or not-destroyed during the intensive competitions.
3. psychological states prior to competition and actual performance during competition.

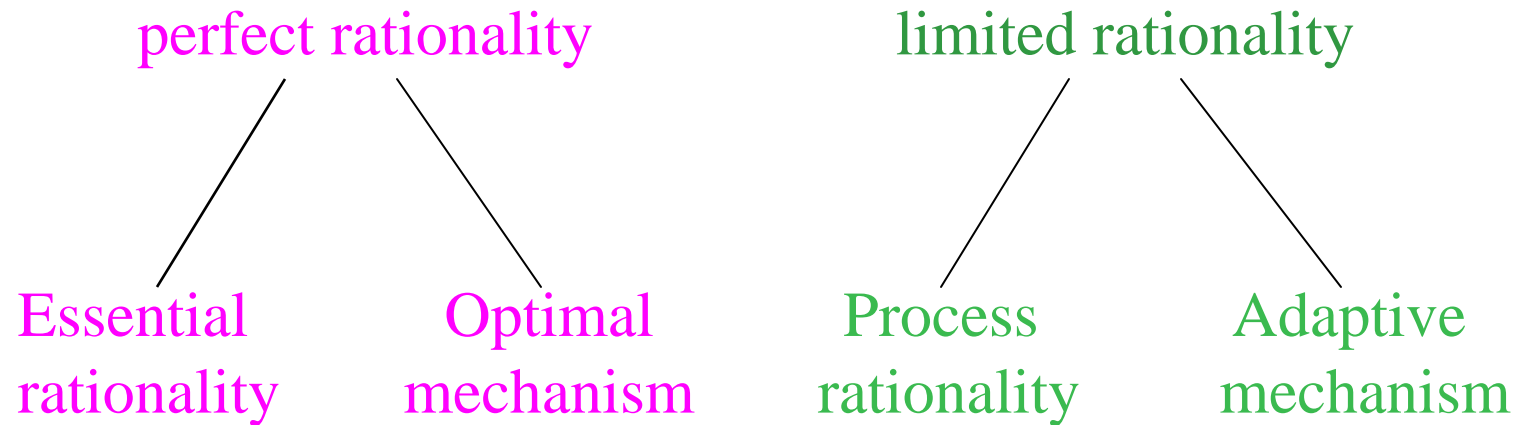


Reasons caused those difficulties

Direction to resolve them



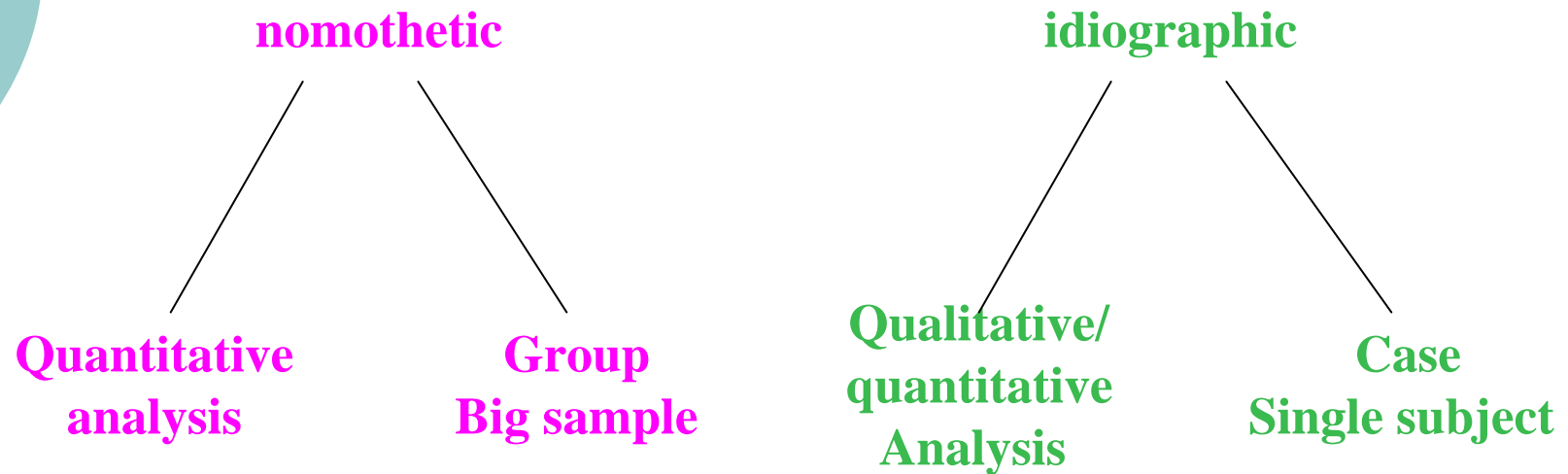
Reason 1: hypothesis on human's rationality



Solution : using satisfied principle to replace optimal principle



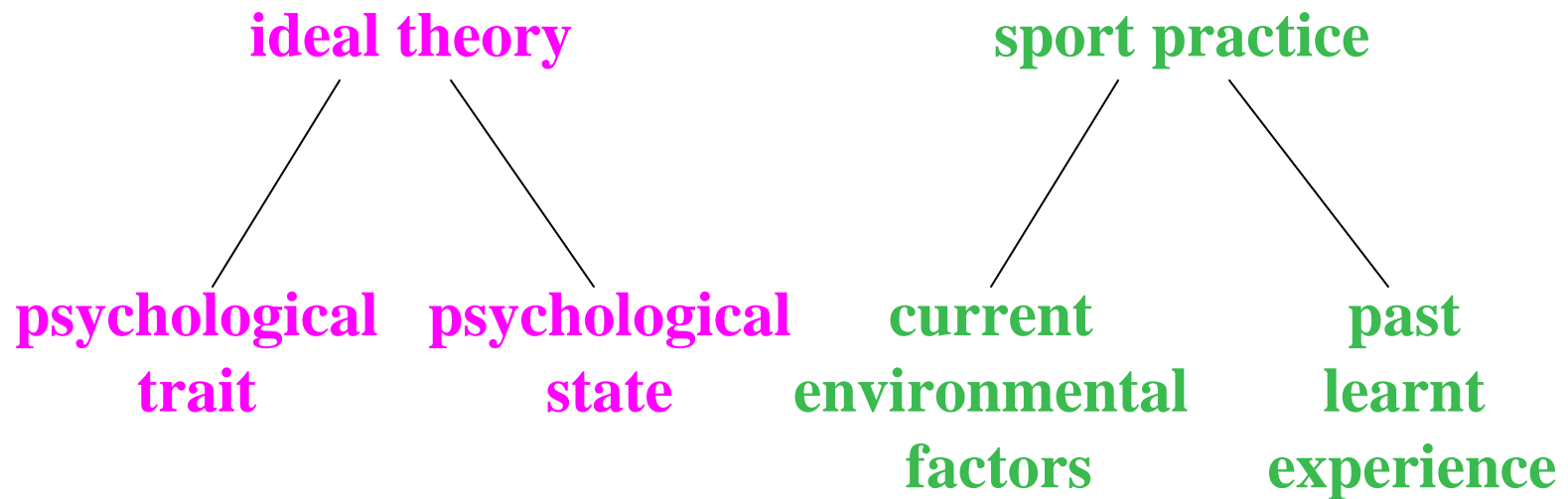
Reason 2: research paradigm



Solution: idiographic



Reason 3: hypothesis on the cause of sport performance



Solution: a better understanding on environmental and learning factors





中体在线图库

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New Definition

Peak performance is successful adversity coping in competitions.

(Even when athletes may not achieve a “peak” state at the time of the competition, if they can reasonably cope with most or all adversities, effectively overcome their mistakes or compensate for their loss, their performance may still be judged as successful.)



Three elements of new definition

Adversity

the situations which impede athletes from achieving their competitive goals.

Coping

the awareness and methods to overcome or cope with adversities.

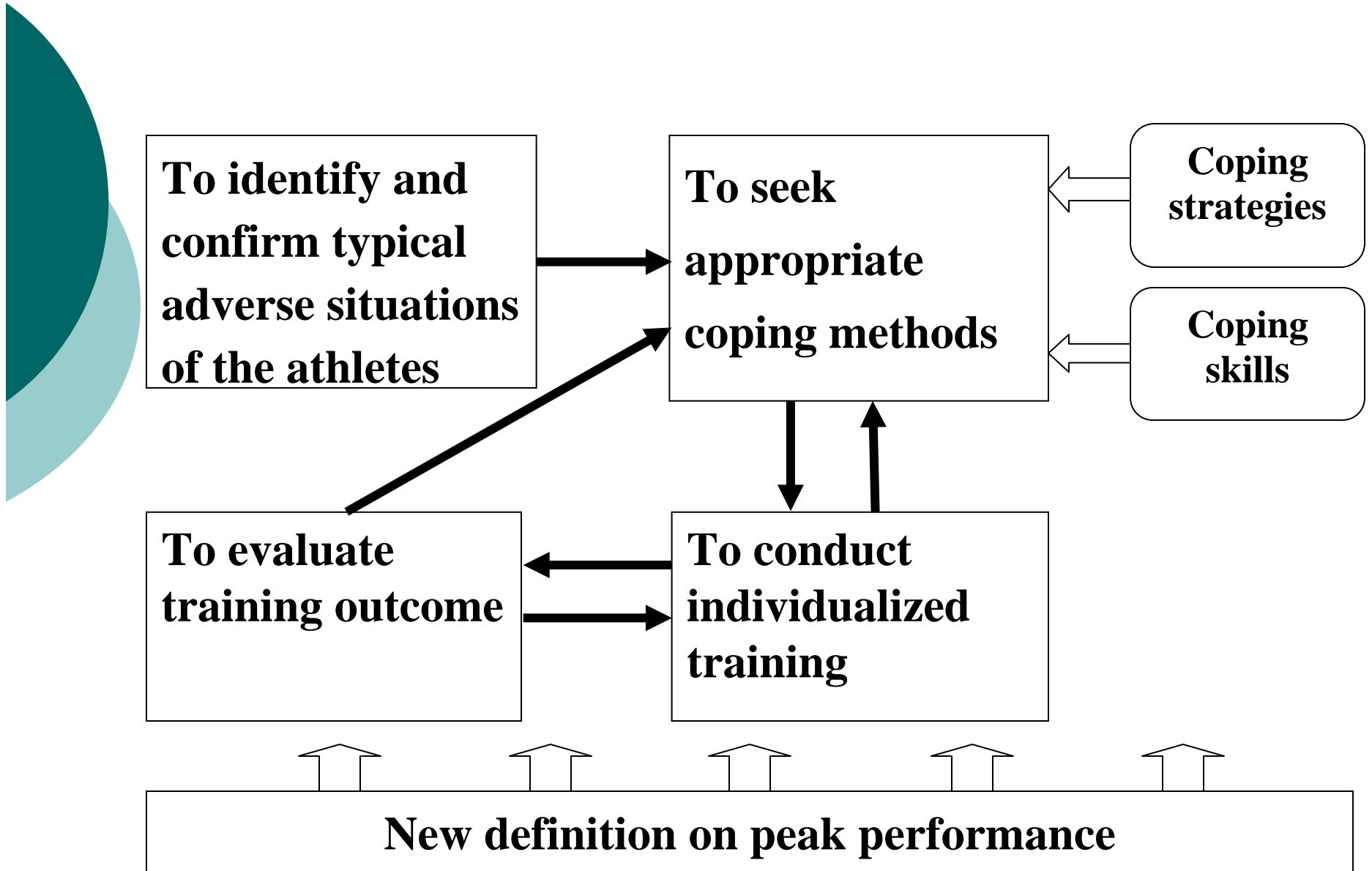
Rationality

to control own irrational minds and to utilize opponents' irrational minds.



Differences between “ideal theory” and “adversity coping”

| | ideal theory | adversity coping |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Concept derivation | top down | bottom up |
| Awareness | frustration is not normal | frustration is a routine |
| Adaptability | emphasizing on optimal zone | emphasizing on dynamic adaptation |
| Operation | abstract training unstable replication | concrete training stable replication |
| Evaluation | subjective evaluation possible difference between sub. and obj. evaluate feeling or experience | sub. and obj. evaluation consistency between sub. and obj. evaluate rationality |



Adversity Coping Training Framework (Si, 2006)



1. To identify and confirm typical adverse situation of the athletes

- ❑ To specific sport
- ❑ To specific competition
- ❑ To specific individual



2. To seek appropriate coping methods

- ❑ Single coping strategy or method
- ❑ Integrated coping strategies or methods
- ❑ Pursuit of rationality





3. To conduct individualized training

- ❑ Evaluating athlete's ability of adversity coping
- ❑ Strengthening athlete's awareness, learning skills, forming habits
- ❑ Transforming from training to competition
- ❑ Long period training and short period training

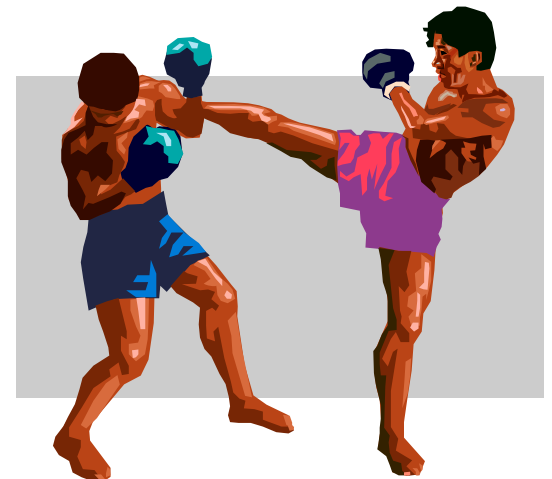


4. To evaluate training outcome

- ❑ Evaluation on awareness, attitude, application
- ❑ Evaluation on improvement of target behavior
- ❑ Evaluation on rationality
- ❑ Evaluation on performance

Coping strategies

- ❑ Problem-focused coping
- ❑ Emotion-focused coping
- ❑ Avoidance coping
- ❑ “Ah Q” coping





“Ah Q” Coping

❖ 勝乃兵家常事

Winning or losing is normal in competitions

❖ 船到自然直

The problem will resolve on its own in its own good time

❖ 顺其自然

Allow nature to take its course, for everything is pre-arranged

❖ 后退一步，海阔天空

Take a step backward and you'll see things from a wider perspective



Prospect Theory (Kahneman, 2002)

- ❑ Most people are risk-avoiding when facing a gain situation.
- ❑ Most people are risk-preferring when facing a loss situation.
- ❑ People are more sensitive to losing than to gaining.



Coping skills

- Relaxation
- Imagery
- Concentration
- Routines



Compared with traditional psychological training program

1. Coaches' involvement is strengthened.
2. Athletes have more direct interest and clear goal.
3. The training period is more flexible.



Compared with traditional psychological training program

4. Diversification of evaluation (e.g., rationality)
5. More tightly integrated with on-field support service
6. More heuristic meanings (e.g., guideline of adversity coping)



Guidelines of Adversity Coping for Athletes

- ❑ Frustration is a routine, while smoothness is an exception.
- ❑ There is always something happening at the wrong time
- ❑ You cannot obtain every necessary factors which can ensure your success.
- ❑ When a “stupid” method works, it is not “stupid” any more.
- ❑ A prepared plan can never be carried out exactly when confronting a strong rival.



Guidelines of Adversity Coping for Athletes

- ❑ Important things are always simple things.
- ❑ Simple things are always hard to do.
- ❑ If you feel you still have something which needs to prepare right before the competition, it probably means that you have prepared too much.
- ❑ If you have thought about your rival in every aspect, remember that the rival has done the same thing to you.
- ❑ Previous success will never appear again in the way you expect.



Guidelines of Adversity Coping for Athletes

- ❑ It is more your teammate's mistake than you rivals attack that can disturb your mood.
- ❑ If you know when to “open” and “close” your mind, your rivals will never disturb your mind.
- ❑ It is equal to suicide if you tend to be risk-avoiding when you are approaching to success.
- ❑ Accumulation of tiny negative thoughts would lead a suddenly mental collapse.
- ❑ Only have currently adaptive rationality, never have permanently entire rationality.



The Stockdale Paradox

“You must maintain your faith that you can and will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties - and confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be.”

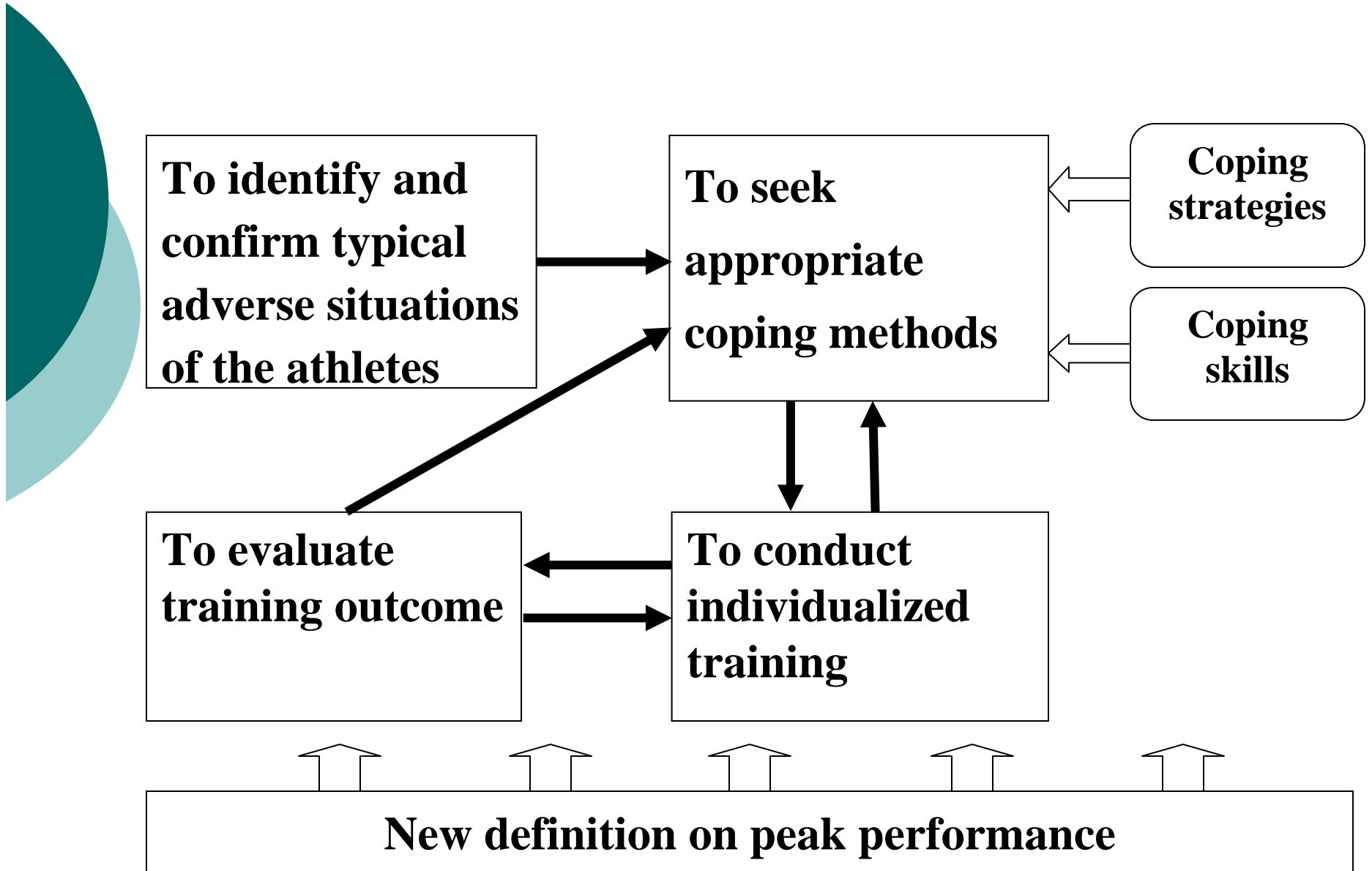
——— *Jim Stockdale*

《Good to great》 (Jim Collins, 2001)



New Definition

Peak performance is
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Adversity Coping Training Framework (Si, 2006)



Mental Training

From: not intentionally learn and
accept adversity

To: intentionally adapt and transform
adversity



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Thank you!